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ACTION NEA-00

RELEASED IN FULL

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AF-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00
	SRPP-00	EAP-00	EUR-00	UTED-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00
	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	NSAE-00	DHS-00	PA-00
	PRS-00	SP-00	TEST-00	USIE-00	IIP-00	DRL-01	G-00
	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/002W				

-----6230DB 082210Z /38

P 081655Z MAY 03

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3867

WHITEHOUSE WASHDC//NSC// PRIORITY

DIA WASHINGTON DC//DIO-MESAT/J2M-2A/RAM-1/DHO-6//

JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK//DOA/DOAS//

CDRNGIC CHARLOTTESVILLE VA//IANG-RAM//

DIA WASHINGTON DC//DIO-MESAT/J2M-2A/RAM-1/DHO-06//

JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK//DOA/DOAS//

USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 RABAT 001017

SECSTATE FOR NEA/PPD, NEA/ENA, IIP/G/NEA/SA

LONDON FOR HKANONA AND POL - GOLDRICH

PARIS FOR POL

E.O. 12958:N/A

TAGS:OPRC, MO, KMDR

SUBJECT: MOROCCO MEDIA REACTION: MAY 8, 2003

FTA

- "ATTAJJDID" (ISLAMIC ARABIC-LANGUAGE DAILY, CIRC. 30,000)
AND "ASHARQ AL-AWSAT" (LONDON-BASED PAN-ARABIC LANGUAGE
DAILY, LOCAL CIRC. 20,000) ON 5/8 PUBLISHED AN INSIDE PAGE
STORY UNDER THE TITLE "TAYEB FASSI FIHRI, MINISTER DELEGATE
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND COOPERATION: THERE IS NO
CONTRADICTION BETWEEN A FTA WITH THE U.S. AND PARTNERSHIP
WITH EUROPE." MINISTER DELEGATE FASSI FIHRI MADE HIS
STATEMENT DURING THE PARLIAMENTARY ORAL SESSION AT THE
SECOND HOUSE CLARIFYING THAT "THERE ARE OTHER MEDITERRANEAN
COUNTRIES THAT HAVE FTA WITH THE U.S. AND PARTNERSHIP

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: SHARON E AHMAD
DATE/CASE ID: 13 MAY 2009 200706444

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AGREEMENTS WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION."

"MAP" (OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT NEWS AGENCY) ON 5/7:

"MOROCCO AND THE UNITED STATES WILL HOLD NEXT JUNE IN MOROCCO A THIRD ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS TO CONCLUDE A FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (FTA), ANNOUNCED THE MOROCCAN DELEGATE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND COOPERATION."

EDITORIALS AND LEAD STORIES

IRAQ, POST-WAR

- "MEDI-1" (SEMI-INDEPENDENT REGIONAL RADIO, AUDIENCE ABOUT 30 MILLION,) HIGHLIGHT FROM NEWS BULLETINS ON 5/7:

"PRESIDENT BUSH MET WITH PRESIDENT JOSE MARIA AZNAR ON MAY 7 AT THE WHITE HOUSE AND THANKED THE SPANISH PRESIDENT FOR HIS SUPPORT DURING THE WAR ON IRAQ. THE U.S., ENGLAND AND SPAIN WILL SOON INTRODUCE A NEW RESOLUTION AT THE U.N. TO LIFT ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAQ."

TAREQ AZIZ QUESTIONED IN MOROCCO BY AMERICANS

- "AL OUSBOU" (INDEPENDENT SENSATIONALIST ARABIC-LANGUAGE WEEKLY, CIRC. 65,000) ON 5/8 CARRIED AN INSIDE PAGE STORY WITH A FRONT PAGE HEADLINE "SECRET MEETING BETWEEN AMERICAN AND MOROCCAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICES TO CREATE A NEW GUANTANAMO IN MOROCCO; AMERICANS QUESTIONED IRAQI LEADERSHIP IN RABAT BEGINNING WITH TAREQ AZIZ", SAYING:

"ACCORDING TO INFORMATION GATHERED BY OUR NEWSPAPER FROM SOURCES CLOSE TO FRENCH SECRET SERVICES, AN IMPORTANT MEETING WAS HELD LAST MAY 1 IN RABAT DURING WHICH SENIOR U.S. AND BRITISH INTELLIGENCE OFFICIALS OFFICIALLY REQUESTED FROM MOROCCO TO HOST HIGH-LEVEL FOREIGN IRAQI LEADERS TO BE QUESTIONED BY U.S. AND BRITISH SECRET OFFICIALS FAR FROM MEDIA EYES. THE U.S. SIDE, ACCORDING TO THE SAME FRENCH SOURCES, HAS INSISTED THAT THE U.S. REQUEST TO MOROCCO SHOULD BE TRANSMITTED IN THE NAME OF PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH PERSONALLY. ... THE MOST IMPORTANT AND EVEN THE MOST DANGEROUS QUESTION IS WHETHER THERE IS ANY PLAN TO TRANSFER SADDAM HUSSEIN AND HIS TWO SONS TO MOROCCO AND THAT THE TRANSFER OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER TAREQ AZIZ IS ONLY A PRELUDE."

U.S. IMMIGRATION

- "JOURNEY TO THE U.S.," INSIDE PAGE EDITORIAL BY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF NOUREDDINE MEFTAH (FORMER IV) IN "AL AYYAM" (INDEPENDENT ARABIC-LANGUAGE WEEKLY, CIRC. 50,000) ON 5/8-15:

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"I DON'T KNOW WHO HAS PUT TOGETHER ALL THE STRINGS WHICH HAVE PUSHED ME TO TRAVEL TO THE U.S... NO ARAB LIKE ME, BLACK-HAIRED WITH MAGHREBIAN CHARACTERISTICS, DARES VISIT BUSH'S COUNTRY DURING THIS HARD PERIOD... DURING A VERY EXHAUSTING TRIP FROM CASABLANCA TO NEW YORK VIA PARIS ALL IMAGES OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO ME FLASHED ACROSS MY MIND... DIRECTLY, AFTER ARRIVING IN THE NEW YORK AIRPORT, HERE IS A STORY I'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH OUR READERS TO BE A LESSON ON THE EMPIRE OF THIS CENTURY ... WHEN MY TURN CAME FOR PASSPORT CONTROL CHECKUP AT THE AIRPORT, A POLICEMAN EXAMINED MY PAPERS, THEN ASKED ME TO WAIT TO START THE QUESTIONING WHICH LASTED HALF AN HOUR...

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THE SECOND ROUND OF QUESTIONING FOR ANOTHER HALF AN HOUR ... TWO HOURS AFTER MY PATIENCE RAN OUT, I STARTED PROTESTING AND CRYING IN A HYSTERICAL MANNER SPEAKING IN A MIXED LANGUAGE USING FRENCH, ARABIC, AND A FEW WORDS IN ENGLISH AND STARTED TO ASK FOR ONLY ONE THING TO GO BACK TO MY COUNTRY IMMEDIATELY ABOARD THE FIRST PLANE. ... I WAS THEN TAKEN TO A THIRD OFFICE WITH A COLORED LADY TRANSLATOR WHILE IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS STOOD IN FRONT OF ME AS IF THEY WERE MARINES AND I WERE AN IRAQI FIGHTER.

AN OFFICER STARTED AFRESH THE SAME QUESTIONING WITH ME AND I TOLD THE COLORED LADY TRANSLATOR: "I AM AN ARAB MUSLIM AND PROUD OF IT. MY DOCUMENTS ARE VALID AND MY VISA IS STAMPED ON MY PASSPORT WITH TEN YEARS VALIDITY. I AM A JOURNALIST AND I HAVE GIVEN YOU ALL THE INFORMATION ... SIR. I DON'T LIKE WHAT AMERICA IS DOING OUTSIDE ITS TERRITORIES AND THERE ARE AMERICANS WHO DON'T LIKE THIS EITHER. I BELIEVE THAT AMERICA INSIDE ITS BORDERS IS A COUNTRY WHICH RESPECTS LAW, SO WHY THIS EXCEPTION? I HAVE WAITED FOR AT LEAST THREE

HOURS, I TOLD THE OFFICER. SHOULD I BE WAITING FOR A HUNDRED HOURS TO HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF HAVING ACCESS TO PARADISE?" ...AFTERWARD, I WENT THROUGH CUSTOMS WHERE THEY AGAIN ASKED AND SEARCHED ME TILL I WAS EXHAUSTED AND WHEN I GOT OUT OF THE AIRPORT, I SWORE I WILL NEVER RETURN TO THIS CURSED COUNTRY."

WTO SANCTIONS AGAINST THE U.S.

"AMERICAN-EUROPEAN ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE CRISIS: WTO COMMERCIAL SANCTIONS AGAINST WASHINGTON," FRONT PAGE ARTICLE IN "LE MATIN" (SEMI-OFFICIAL, FRENCH-LANGUAGE DAILY, CIRC. 50,000,) ON 5/8:

"THERE IS A CONFLICT BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE U.S.

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NOT IMPRESSED, AT ALL, BY THE POWER PRESSURE AND INSUBORDINATION TO INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF ITS ECONOMIC RIVAL, THE EUROPEAN UNION HAS DOUBLED ITS EFFORTS FOR AN ECONOMIC WAR THAT IS GOING TO BE LONG AND TIRESOME FOR BOTH PARTIES ... PASCAL LAMY HAS SUCCEEDED IN CONVINCING THE WTO TO ISSUE SANCTIONS AGAINST THE U.S."

BIG ARMED OPERATION FOILED IN SAUDI ARABIA

- "AL ALAM" (GOVERNMENT COALITION, ARABIC-LANGUAGE DAILY, ISTIQLAL PARTY, CIRC. 55,000) AND "ASHARQ AL-AWSAT" (LONDON-BASED PAN-ARABIC LANGUAGE DAILY, LOCAL CIRC. 20,000) CARRIED A FRONT PAGE AFP STORY UNDER THE TITLE "A BIG ARMED ATTACK WAS FOILED IN SAUDI ARABIA"; "RIYADH: BIG AL QAEDA TERRORIST ATTACK WAS FOILED AND DISCOVERY OF EXPLOSIVES AND PERSECUTION OF NINETEEN SUSPECTS INCLUDING A CANADIAN-KUWAITI AND A YEMENI."

NATIONAL NEWS

CROWN PRINCE MOULAY HASSAN BORN TODAY

- GENERAL COVERAGE: "PRINCE MOULAY HASSAN, KING'S FIRST SON, WAS BORN TODAY, MAY 8, AT 6:40 A.M."

MOROCCAN POLICE TRAINED IN THE U.S.

- "ASSABAH" (INDEPENDENT ARABIC-LANGUAGE DAILY, CIRC. 30,000) ON 5/8 CARRIED A FRONT PAGE STORY HEADLINED "MOROCCAN POLICE COMMISSAIRES IN AMERICA FOR ANTI-TERRORISM TRAINING", SAYING:

"MOROCCAN POLICE FROM JUDICIAL AND PUBLIC SECURITY WILL TRAVEL ON MAY 22 TO THE U.S. IN THE CONTEXT OF A CONTINUOUS TRAINING PROGRAM FOLLOWED BY THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION OF NATIONAL POLICE TO BENEFIT FROM U.S. EXPERTISE IN DIFFERENT FIELDS, INCLUDING ANTI-TERRORISM."

AHMED TAWFIQ, MINISTER OF ENDOWMENT AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

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5/8 CARRIED A TWO PAGE EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH MINISTER AHMED TAWFIQ, MINISTER OF ENDOWMENT AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS (HIS VERY FIRST INTERVIEW SINCE HIS NOMINATION) MAJOR POINTS AS FOLLOWS:

- THE MOVEMENTS THAT ARE CALLED SALAFI ARE INSIGNIFICANT IN TERMS OF INFLUENCE, NUMBERS AND CONTENT.

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- I CALL ON ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS IN MOROCCO AND ALL OTHER
RELIGIOUS COMPONENTS TO UNIFY THEIR POSITIONS ON:

- 1) NEUTRALITY OF MOSQUES
- 2) WE ARE ALL CONCERNED WITH ENHANCING MORAL ASPECTS OF
MOROCCAN SOCIETY
- 3) THERE SHOULD NOT BE POLITICAL BARGAINING TO INCLUDE
RELIGIOUS FACTORS IN A NEGATIVE MANNER IN SOCIAL DYNAMICS.

- THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN CONTROLLING RELIGION DOES NOT
MEAN THAT WE SHOULD HAVE ONE POLICEMAN AT THE HEAD OF EVERY
MUSLIM WHILE PRAYING.

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